



IdaGrass

Volume 10 Issue 4

July-August 2014

UPCOMING BLUEGRASS EVENTS

Darrington Bluegrass Festival

July 18-20

Darrington, WA

www.darringtonbluegrass.com

Hard Times Bluegrass Festival

July 25-27

Hamilton, MT

www.hardtimesbluegrass.com

Council Mountain Music Festival

August 15 & 16

Council, ID

www.councilfestival.com

Bannock County Bluegrass Festival

August 22-24

Pocatello, ID

www.bannockcountybluegrassfestival.com

ISBA Fall Jam

August 29-31

Weiser, ID

www.idahosawtoothbluegrass.org

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The purpose of the Idaho Sawtooth Bluegrass Association:

- To preserve and perpetuate bluegrass music as a heritage of our country;
- To promote the education and enjoyment of bluegrass music;
- To promote fellowship among all musicians and supporters who have a love for bluegrass music, regardless of race, creed, color, ethnicity, or ability to play music.

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

It's painful to accept, but the fact is: we're halfway through the summer. And, by extension, the other reality: we're halfway through festival season.

Now for the good news....there's lots of great music still to be shared before the leaves turn. Just in our area of the country alone, we have venues in Washington, Idaho, Oregon and California from which to choose. If we didn't ever need to go home (laundry and such, you know) it could be never-ending!

But the real beauty of life lies in....balance. Balance between vacation time and time spent at home, balance between festival attendance and family get-togethers, balance between jamming with friends and practicing by oneself. All of these things have the potential to create awesome memories (perhaps with the exception of those pesky practice hours). All we have to do is prioritize, and then carve out the hours to make it all work. Never an easy task, it seems...at least not in our household.

In the long run, we nurture the things we treasure most, and hope and pray that, when we look back, we will be satisfied with the choices we have made. As the summer season winds down, I hope that all of you will have ample opportunity to create those moments and memories that you will be able to treasure for years to come.

We're looking forward to creating some of those memories in Weiser over the Labor Day weekend, and hope to see you there. Take advantage of this great venue to invite some new pickers, and introduce them to the rest of this motley crew of bluegrass lovers! And, once we all arrive...

Let's play some music!

PT Limehouse

**ONGOING ISBA SPONSORED
BLUEGRASS JAMS****Middle Zone Jam:**

The Middle Zone Jam is on summer hiatus. It will resume on Thursday, September 4 at Stan and Trudee Stickland's home, 5714 Centerbrook Drive, Boise. Call for details: 208-377-5326

Northern Zone Jams:

First Saturday of the month at the Jack in the Box (1903 G St) in Lewiston, and the third Sunday of the month at the Lenore Store on Highway 12. The Saturday jam runs 10 AM to 12 noon, and the Sunday one from 1-4 PM.

DO DO THAT VOODOO THAT YOU DO SO WELL....

Just a catchy way of reminding you that **ISBA DUES ARE DUE**. Memberships that are lapsed after September 1 means no more newsletters, which would be...tragic, no? Our membership year runs April-April, so if you haven't settled up with Trudee recently, please remember to do so. Check out the details (and her contact info) on page 8.

ISBA FALL FESTIVAL & JAM DETAILS

Location: Weiser, Idaho, at the site of the old Technical School. This is the same place where the camping for the Old Time Fiddler's contest takes place.

Dates: Labor Day weekend, August 29, 30, and 31. You may come as early as Wednesday and stay through Tuesday.

Lots of Camping: RV and tent camping under the shade trees. Reservations: (208) 414-0255; ask for Sandra Cooper.

Camping prices are \$11.88/day without electricity and \$16.20/day with electricity. (bring your extension cord)

Showers and restrooms available onsite, but no water or sewer hook-ups.

Quiet area will be provided for those who want it.

Other Accommodations: If you're not in a motor home, RV, trailer or tent, you can still come and enjoy the weekend! There is an extensive listing of available motels and B&Bs at this site:

<http://www.fiddlecontest.org/accommodations>

Food Vendors: There will be food vendors available onsite...and of course, Weiser has restaurants to offer, as well.

Workshops: Saturday morning. Beginning and advanced guitar, banjo, mandolin, bass, and fiddle.

Bluegrass Band Contest: Saturday afternoon

Jamming: All day every day, and into the night. (who knew?)

Come join us Labor Day weekend and end your summer on a Bluegrass note!



Jamming at Kamiah 2014

ISBA BOARD MEETING INFORMATION

BOD meetings since the Kamiah Super Jam have focused largely on procuring our new site for, and organizing, the Labor Day Festival and Jam. Your Board has been working hard. Each member of the board has enthusiastically taken on a part of the Fall Festival and we feel like we are going to have a super result. On other matters, the Board voted to amend its by-laws to say that a simple majority of board members makes a quorum.



The Boss and Jerry Meyers

UNITS OF TIME

One of the most useful things a beginning bluegrass player can do is to learn to play through several of the most commonly recurring chord progressions in bluegrass music. In order to do this, one must develop an accurate sense for certain units of musical time. For, playing through a chord progression involves not just simply changing from one chord to another in the right order, but changing to the right chord at the right time. To get this wrong, even to the slightest extent, will mean that as soon as one tries to play with others, one will find oneself playing something which is musically incompatible

with what the rest of the group is playing. Indeed, in many cases, it is the errors involving the smaller, not the larger, units of time (e.g., adding or subtracting a beat or half a beat) that tend to have the worst results when it comes to making the music sound 'out of sync'. Furthermore, these 'small' errors can be much harder to recover from than errors involving longer durations of musical time.

A typical non-instrumental bluegrass song consists of three types of parts: verses, choruses, and instrumental breaks. Each part is divisible into x number of lines (usually 4). Each line, in turn, is divisible into x number of measures or bars (once again, usually 4, though the last line of a break is very often extended beyond 4 measures, and the length of the last line may vary from break to break within the song).

If one does not sense where these divisions occur, it will be very difficult to play through a song correctly. One of the most frequently recurring ways I have seen this problem manifest itself when playing with others is in the cases of people who have no problem changing to the right chord at the right time while they are singing, but then all of a sudden, their chord changes are all over the place - much as if they had never played the song before! - as soon as someone starts into an instrumental break for the song. This does not happen when one knows the chord progression for a song or when one has a reliable sense for what it 'feels' like, for instance, to play a 4-measure line as opposed to a 5-measure line. In many cases, this phenomenon is the natural result of having learned 'when' to change chords by way of little more than observing which syllables of the lyrics coincide with the changes, rather than by way of having learned the chord progression per se.

Here is a straightforward example of a 4-line chorus in which each line consists of 4 measures:

Do Lord, oh / do Lord, oh / do remember /	
me, /	Progression: 1111
Do Lord, oh / do Lord, oh / do remember /	
me, /	4441
Do Lord, oh / do Lord, oh / do remember /	
me, /	1111
Way be-/ yond the / blue./	
/	1511

In this instance, the lyrics are quite helpful for illustrating the basic divisions of the parts of the song. (As a useful side point, observe that both the chords and the melody of lines 1 and 3 – not just the lyrics – are identical. This is true of many bluegrass songs, even in cases where the lyrics are not the same for both of the lines.)

In most other cases, unfortunately, it is not quite as obvious just from the lyrics themselves how many lines a part consists of, or where one line ends and the next begins. To mention just one of these factors, in many songs the first one to three syllables of a vocal line are pickups, and therefore precede the first full measure of a new line. For example, each vocal line of *Will The Circle Be Unbroken* starts with two pickup syllables:

	I was /
standing / __ by my / window / __ on a /	
Progression: 1111	
cold and / cloudy / day, / __ when I /	
4411	
saw that / __ hearse come / rolling / __ for to /	
1111	
carry my/ mo – ther a / way. / __ (Will	
the)/	1511

In such cases one will do well to pay attention to where the first heavily accented syllable occurs within a vocal line. Observe also that

while the beginning of many of the measures do not coincide with a new syllable, this is true only of the even numbered measures of each line. This is also the case in many other bluegrass songs; for, just as when one divides a typical measure of bluegrass into four equal parts, the 2nd and 4th parts tend to feel weaker than the 1st and the 3rd, so also a corresponding pattern of stronger and weaker can often be observed within a 4-measure line when it is considered in terms of 4 equal divisions. To a certain extent, the same idea can be extended to a 4-line part as well. The occurrence of these types of patterns are an important factor for determining where a given unit of musical time ends and the next begins. In the absence of underlying patterns, the units themselves would be rather arbitrary.

By counting the beats (out loud when possible) within each measure while playing, one can help oneself to develop the ability to consistently play through a measure of music without addition or subtraction. Once one can do that, the same method can then be used to develop the ability to play through a whole line without addition or subtraction. Instead of counting the beats within each measure, count '1' at the beginning of the 1st measure of the line, '2' at the beginning of the 2nd measure of the line, etc., making sure always to start the count over again at '1' each time one comes to the beginning of a new line. Once that is mastered, then finally, one can use the same method to count the lines within a part, so that once that is likewise mastered, one is then freed up to pay closer attention to the overall arrangement of the song – the bigger picture.

Happy Pickin',

Jason Homey

banjomaster1@yahoo.com



Banjo Workshop Instructors + 1 Kamiah 2014

TO KNOW IT IS TO LOVE IT

PART IV

Here we go again. I thought we'd talk about the dominant 7th chord. They're a lot like minors in that you can make any major chord into a 7th chord, just by flattening the 1st note by 2 frets. This is similar to the way you can convert a major into a minor by flattening the 3rd note.

By the by, you would think that the 7th chord would have the 7th note of the scale in it. It doesn't, and this puzzled me. So I went to see my good friend Bob Kensinger, who knows a whole lot more about music than me, and asked him about this conundrum. He laughed and said "The reason is this. We borrow the flatted note (that is, the note that is flatted from the 7th note of the scale) from the chromatic scale. Why? Because it has a "bluesy" sound, and it sounds good."

Now you know that by simply flattening the 1st note by 2 frets, you will make a major chord into a 7th. Simple as that! And, by the way, if you flat the 3rd note of the scale by one fret at the same time, you will be forming a minor 7th.

Next time...you'll just have to wait and see.
Jim Sanders

heading up and organizing the committees at
Kamiah 2014. Kudos to Helen!

	E	A	D	G	B	E
1st fret	F	A# Bb	D# Eb	G# Ab	C	F
2nd fret	F# Gb	B	E	A	C# Db	F# Gb
3rd fret	G	C	F	A# Bb	D	G
4th fret	G# Ab	C# Db	F# Gb	B	D# Eb	G# Ab
5th fret	A	D	G	C	E	A
6th fret	A# Bb	D# Eb	G# Ab	C# Db	F	A# Bb
7th fret	B	E	A	D	F# Gb	B
8th fret	C	F	A# Bb	D# Eb	G	C
9th fret	C# Db	F# Gb	B	E	G# Ab	C# Db
10th fret	D	G	C	F	A	D
11th fret	D# Eb	G# Ab	C# Db	F# Gb	A# Bb	D# Eb
12th fret	E	A	D	G	B	E



Banjo Workshop Sign Kamiah 2014

(Ed note: Yes, what you see is correct. That sign was made like that. We left it like that. As Helen said: "here's your sign".)



Gravelly Mtn Boys Kamiah 2014

Helen Smith submitted the pictures in this issue of IdaGrass. She did a super job of



Harmony Workshop Kamiah 2014



JULY 25,26,27, 2014

**Kids
In
Bluegrass**

Featuring 11 Bands-

**Bring
Your
Lawn
Chairs**

Trinity River Band—Callahan, FL

Black Mtn.—Missoula, MT

JD Webb & the Downstate Ramblers—Baker, OR

Gravelly Mtn. Boys—Alberton, MT

New South Fork—Idaho Falls, ID

Pinegrass—Missoula, MT

Red Desert Ramblers—Salt Lake City, UT

Blue To The Bone—Hamilton, MT

Spring Thaw Band—Missoula, MT

Darby Sireens—From Hither and Yon

Mike & Tari Conroy Band—Conner, MT

**Bluegrass
Gospel
Sunday
Morning**

**All
Dogs
On
Leash**

Admission:

Adults-\$12.00 for weekend
Kids under 12-\$6.00 for weekend
Camping—\$12.00 for weekend

**Food
Vendors
On
Site**

Featured Bluegrass Pioneers:

Dale Kerns, Hamilton/Oklahoma
Dean Williams, Missoula, MT
Ray & Shirley Jacobs, Eureka, MT
Forrest Clark, Clinton, MT

**10 Miles South of Hamilton, MT—mile marker 37 —163 Forest Hill Road
1- 406-821-3777 www.hardtimesbluegrass.com**

DUES INFORMATION AND MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name_____

Address_____

City_____State_____Zip_____

Phone_____Email Address_____

IdaGrass, the ISBA newsletter, is offered either in email or printed letter format. Using email saves the Association the cost of postage and printing. We want you to receive the newsletter in whichever format you prefer. To offset production and mailing costs, membership dues for those electing USPS hard copy of the newsletter are \$20.00. For those members choosing email delivery, annual dues are \$15.00 for an individual or family.

I would like to receive the newsletter: Email US Postal Service

I am joining as: New Member Renewal

Date:_____

Yearly membership runs April-April.

Please mail to: **Idaho Sawtooth Bluegrass Association**
 c/o Trudee Strickland
 5714 Centerbrook Dr.
 Boise, ID 83705

**Have ideas, comments, questions, or concerns?
Want to get involved? Here's your Board of Directors:**

Northern Zone

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Scott Lombard, Lewiston
bluegrass_hillbilly@live.com

Southern Zone

John Boyer, Twin Falls
boyerj1@mindspring.com

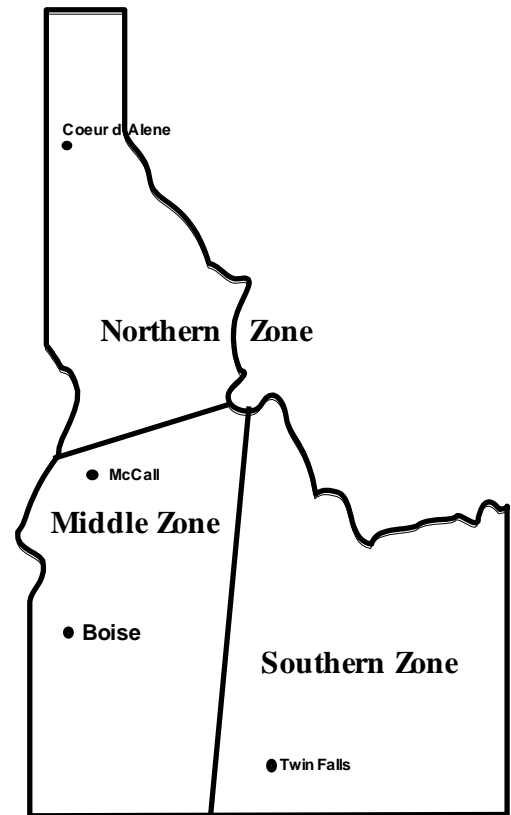
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Check us out on the web: www.idahosawtoothbluegrass.org

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